

October 27, 2004

Dr. Lee S. Schulman
The Carnegie Foundation for
the Advancement of Teaching
51 Vista Lane
Stanford CA 94305

Dear Dr. Schulman:

Chabot College is pleased to submit this grant proposal for “Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in California Community Colleges.” Over the past several years, Chabot has undertaken a number of basic skills and institutional reform efforts with the goal of transforming the college into a Learning Centered-Institution. We have invested considerable resources to thoroughly research and pilot innovations in collaborative learning and interdisciplinary instruction, student learning outcomes, classroom assessment techniques, and supplemental instruction among related learning centered approaches. We believe these efforts are closely aligned with the goals of the Carnegie Foundation and this request for proposals.

Like many community colleges in California and across the nation, Chabot increasingly serves a student population that is critically under prepared for college level work. We view this as a problem not only for developmental education, but as a challenge we must grapple with college-wide. Consequently, Chabot’s institutional planning and improvement process is focused on efforts to strengthen, assess, and document student learning in the classroom. Much of our best work and thinking around student learning involve innovations in our pre-collegiate English and mathematics curriculum. Last year, our Institutional Planning and Budget Council awarded discretionary funds to 18 projects to research and pilot strategies that enhance student learning and success. Learning communities in developmental education, supplemental instruction in

mathematics, and faculty development around learning-centered pedagogy were among the most effective of these projects. The college intends to utilize Carnegie funding, if selected, to build on these initiatives.

We have thought carefully about how we intend to support grant activities beyond the three years of this project. Learning communities, in particular, can be costly for an institution. Significantly, the model proposed in this application was specifically designed to limit costs after initial faculty and program development. Our intent is to bring the benefits of cohort learning to a greater number of students across the college in a way that is cost-effective for the institution.

Moreover, we are pursuing other private and public grants such as the federal TRIO and Title III grants to expand our learning innovations in basic skills and support institutional efforts to become a learning-centered college. As noted, Chabot considers the enhancement of basic skills a college-wide challenge, and as a college, we are actively seeking resources to address this need.

Most importantly, Chabot is deeply committed to providing faculty time and support to work together on student learning and to bring inquiry and discussion around student learning into the classroom. Our institutional improvement work through program review, strategic planning, and enrollment management has enabled the college to have discussions across disciplines and programs about what works best and where we want to direct our limited resources. I am confident that even in the absence of outside funding, Chabot will sustain proposed activities by redirecting college resources where most needed.

Thank you for selecting us to submit a proposal. Chabot College fully commits to this endeavor and authorizes the use of campus data to evaluate program effectiveness and share findings with other colleges. We look forward to working with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching on this important and worthwhile project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert E. Carlson
President